

April 7, 2026

Chairman Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.
House Committee on Corporations
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: H 7882 - An Act Relating to Public Utilities and Carriers – Rhode Island Utility Fair Share Roadway Repair Act

The Hon. Brett P. Smiley
Mayor
Ricky Caruolo
General Manager

Dear Chairman Solomon:

The Providence Water Supply Board would like to take this opportunity to comment on H 7882 which would require any public utility company, that needs to completely close any portion of a state or municipal highway for work, to provide notice to all residential and business property owners located within 1,000 ft of the closed highway at least 48 hours before the road closure.


Providence Water owns and operates the largest water utility in Rhode Island. We are responsible for supplying affordable, high-quality drinking water to more than 600,000 retail and wholesale customers throughout the state. While we understand the importance of minimizing disruption during utility infrastructure work, we have some questions and concerns with the legislation as drafted.

Providence Water is committed to providing quality customer service. Over the last three years, Providence Water has invested approximately \$36 million dollars refurbishing and relining water mains and more than \$38 million dollars replacing lead service lines in our distribution system. We understand the importance of effective coordination and clear communication in order to minimize disruption to residents and businesses when performing essential utility construction. Providence Water utilizes a number of communication methods for keeping residents and businesses informed of our utility work including mailings/letters, property notice postings, social media and website postings, CodeRED system notifications and community outreach meetings.

Providence Water has questions/requires clarification regarding the terminology and specifics of the proposed legislation. In addition, the proposed notification requirements may be problematic when addressing non-emergency operations and maintenance work performed by Providence Water maintenance crews during times when they are not actively addressing emergency issues.

Maintaining the highest water quality standards and customer service is top priority for Providence Water and we welcome the opportunity to work with stakeholders to address this issue. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

Respectfully,
PROVIDENCE WATER SUPPLY BOARD


Ricky Caruolo
General Manager

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